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UNCLAS TAIPEI 003505

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -
ROBERT PALLADINO
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPRC KMDR KPAO TW

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: BUSH RE-ELECTION

"Taiwan May Be Priority Issue for Bush's New Foreign Agenda"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" said in an editorial (11/5):

"U.S. President George W. Bush, who won a second term in the Tuesday poll after defeating his Democratic challenger Senator John Kerry with 274 Electoral College votes and a projected margin of 3.5 million national popular ballots, is very likely to set Taiwan as one of his major diplomatic priorities during the next four years of his new administration.

"The reason is simple and clear: Bush does not want Taiwan, an issue which has already troubled him and his administration during much of his first term, to continue to stand in the way of his effort to strengthen Washington's Beijing relations. .

"A new U.S. administration would no longer just passively express a position of not supporting Taiwan independence. It could distinctly tell Chen that Washington disagrees with his claim that Taiwan is a sovereign country. And that it is opposed to any moves by Taipei to pursue de jure independence.

"Meanwhile, any new U.S. initiative in easing tension in the Taiwan Strait can be expected to include an increased effort to bring Taipei and Beijing to the negotiating table. A resumption of contacts and dialogue has been believed by Washington to be the best way to settle differences between the two sides. ."

PAAL